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- ART. IV. — 1. *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy, chiefly during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.* By SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.
2. *The Emotions and the Will.* By ALEXANDER BAIN. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1859.
3. *Elements of Psychological Medicine.* By DANIEL NOBLE, M. D. London: John Churchill. 1855.
4. *The Human Brain, its Structure, Physiology, and Diseases.* By SAMUEL SOLLY. From the Second London Edition. Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard. 1848.

SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH has, in his treatise on Ethical Philosophy, drawn attention to the importance of distinguishing the *criterion* of morality from the states of mind excited by the moral qualities of actions. He agrees with the utilitarians in considering the tendency to produce the greatest amount of happiness to be the criterion of morality, but is careful to apply this criterion to motives rather than to external acts.

The opinions of philosophers upon the subject are susceptible of a threefold classification.

In certain states of society and of the individual, conformity to some external authority is the criterion of morality. The authority may be that of a human being, as a parent, guardian, magistrate, or prophet; or of an organization combining the influence of many persons, as the Church or State; or, finally, that of the Deity himself. To him who adopts a criterion of this kind, questions concerning the morality of actions relate to conformity with that will which is the foundation of morality. This class of opinions is observed more frequently among practical men than among philosophers. The philosophic mind disregards unsupported human authority, and seeks to found the claims of the parent, the sovereign, the Church, and the state upon the will of God. Conformity to the Divine Will is the chief criterion of this class. This criterion is defended by Augustine, by Ockham, and later, by Calvin and his school, and finds a zealous champion in Dr. Wardlaw. Frequent references to the will of God, as determinative of moral questions, are found in the writings of every moralist who believes in the existence of a Supreme and Perfect Being.

The second class of opinions presents some quality of human nature as the source of our knowledge of right and wrong, — the court of appeal before which questions of morality are to be tried. This quality may be termed the moral sense, as by Hutcheson ; common sense, as by Buffier ; the practical reason, as by Kant ; reason *par excellence*, conformity to the eternal fitness of things, as by Samuel Clarke ; or conscience, as by Butler, Stewart, Brown, and others.

The third class presents general utility as the criterion. Above all thinkers of this class, ancient and modern, towers the form of Mr. Bentham.

A writer imbued with the spirit of Comte might designate these three classes of opinions as so many progressive stages, to be termed respectively the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive ;* and give preference to the last as the ultimate doctrine. They do, in fact, illustrate that important law of human belief to which Comte has called attention. The human mind at first adopts the declarations of others, next seeks to explain nature by the aid of abstract conceptions, and finally discerns the importance of observing facts and tendencies. By no such summary generalization, however, can we dispose of the ethical systems of the various masters of human thought, who have instructed and improved the world.

Each of the above classes of opinions embodies some truth specially appreciable under certain circumstances, and not to be neglected in a comprehensive view of morality. Each, also, contains an error, liable, if embraced, to lead to confusion in theory and aberration in practice.

The first class of opinions presents the truth that it is God's will that his creatures practise virtue, and that every departure from rectitude is personally offensive to Him. In view of this great fact, it is not surprising that minds of the most logical class have considered the invariable connection of morality with the Divine Will as entitling the latter to the position of a

* We do not wish to be understood as representing this to have been the view of Comte himself. His firm conviction of the disinterestedness of virtue led him to discard the claims of utility as the criterion of morality, and to embrace a view essentially metaphysical, but modified by his attempt to reconstruct phrenology. See the last chapter of Vol. I. of his *Système de Politique Positive*.

criterion of the former. The practical good tendency of this view to promote piety and humility is too obvious to require discussion.

The error of this view consists in its mere presentation of the supernatural side of morality. If we are unable to explain a fact, otherwise than by declaring that it has the will of God as its cause, we can add little to the sum of knowledge. The principles of morality are related to other natural phenomena, and are legitimate subjects of investigation.

The practical tendency of the exclusive adoption of this criterion is to place maxims regarded as expressive of the Divine Will beyond the reach of discussion, when thorough examination might reveal the falsity of the assumption of Divine authority, or, on the other hand, give additional weight to the maxims by showing their intrinsic excellence and special applicability.

The truth presented by the second class of views is, that we do entertain pure, disinterested, and specific inclinations toward virtue. The practical effect of this class of views in inculcating implicit obedience to our convictions is also clear.

The error of this view is, that it sets up as an infallible inward guide opinions and emotions springing sometimes from selfish and erroneous sources. Its practical bad tendency, when unmodified, is to produce an unyielding, tenacious, and narrow character, cleaving to principles, but incapable of appreciating the modifications which they undergo amid the clashing of circumstances, and ill adapted to charity towards opposing convictions.

The truth presented by the third class is, that the practice of virtue is the safest mode of seeking happiness. Its good practical effects are the stimulation of social and political investigation, and the promotion of needed reforms.

The error of this class consists in confusion of the motives of a selfish with those of an unselfish character, and in a vain attempt to simplify the emotional nature. Their practical bad tendencies are to induce men to act upon, and present to others, low motives to virtue, to ignore those incentives to action the effects of which are not readily appreciable by the intellect, and to divert attention from religious duties.

Inasmuch as each of these classes embodies important truths, it is natural that individual minds should grasp the truths best adapted to their habits and capacities. Men's circumstances and habitudes have, therefore, extensively influenced their views of the criterion of morality.

I. Where society is democratic, there is a strong tendency towards utilitarianism. He who follows his own good impulses, or obeys what he considers to be the will of the Supreme Being, in opposition to the comprehensive interests of those around him, incurs general disapprobation, despite the purity of his motives ; while he who is obviously animated by the sole intention of benefiting his fellow-men is regarded as a faithful public servant, the friend of all. In such a state of society, and more especially in those periods of agitation and conflict which precede its establishment, men's minds are frequently directed to the overthrow of institutions which the teachings of the prevailing religion and the consciences of conservative men sanction and defend. What motive can be alleged as a justification of attacks upon such institutions, save regard for the general welfare ? M. de Tocqueville, in his chapters entitled "The Americans combat Individualism by the Principle of Interest rightly understood," and "That the Americans apply the Principles of Interest rightly understood to Religious Matters," has ably shown the tendency of democracy to utilitarianism.* In the great democratic community of ancient times, Socrates clearly recognized the production of happiness as the object of virtue.† Aristotle begins his *Ethics* with the announcement that happiness is the highest object of action. The Sophists seem to have enforced the importance of virtue to the attainment of happiness with all their art and eloquence. Zeno, however, and his disciple Carneades, flourishing at a time when democracy, subsistent merely in form, languished beneath the gloomy shadow of Macedonian ascendancy, taught far other views.

In states of society where culture is restricted to predominant classes, ethical philosophers are influenced in their rea-

* Vol. II. p. 129, ed. 1840.

† Xenoph. Mem. IV. 1, 2 ; Id. IV. 7, 8 ; Plato, Alcibiades, 11, 13, p. 145 C ; Plato, Apol. Soc., c. 17, p. 30 A.

sonings by the high sense of personal dignity, characteristic of the members of an oligarchy. They are apt to assume that virtue consists in obedience to an innate quality, imperious in its mandates, and alone adapted to preside over the harmonious development of man. He who obeys this principle — who thus develops himself — need neither look to the gods nor to his fellow-men for motives in well-doing. His own nature furnishes him with a high and noble object of pursuit. To live conformably to nature, *τῇ φύσει ὁμολογουμένως ζῆν*, as the Stoic writers express it, is the purpose of life. Such a view, when first formed, is apt to concede freedom to the will. As, however, the political development of society involves the high and cultivated classes in ruin, it may, like the stoicism of the latter days of the Roman Republic and the earlier period of the Empire, represent the virtuous man as nobly strong against gloomy and overpowering fate, amid circumstances which almost paralyze the will itself. Even in its decline, however, this view is the stronghold of the human will.

When society, disorganized by conflicts, seeks order and tranquillity under despotic power, the feebleness of the individual is recognized, and the necessity inculcated of submission to the mandates of a central authority, which represents itself as acting for the general good, even where it inflicts suffering. Men's knowledge of political government affects their opinions of moral government; and they turn from an absolute and corrupt monarch to the more absolute but incorruptible Ruler of the universe. This view is strongly monotheistic, and even in polytheistic countries rests upon the monotheistic conception of fate as a deity ruling the gods. The first centuries of our era were thus peculiarly adapted to the reception of Christian morality.

It is well that these various criteria should prevail, as indicated, in different states of society; for each is peculiarly adapted to sustain the virtues upon which some corresponding social fabric rests.

A monarchy cannot be permanent or well governed unless there prevail among the people a strong sentiment of loyalty to the sovereign. Nothing can so well cherish loyalty as the popular conviction that monarchy is deeply founded upon anal-

ogy to the Divine government. No habit is so favorable to civil obedience as that of obeying the commands of the Deity, simply because they are such. Prudence in avoiding collisions with the religious convictions of his people enables a sovereign to make religion the surest prop of his throne.

An aristocracy can neither govern well nor be permanent, unless there prevail among its members, and in its intercourse with its inferiors, a high sense of honor and courtesy. What so strongly urges towards self-respect as the opinion that we have in our own bosoms an infallible guide, urging us towards perfection by its encouragements, and deterring us from vice by its warnings? or how can we be so powerfully constrained towards courtesy as by the consideration that every person we meet, however disadvantageously or subordinately situated, has in his nature the same characteristic of manhood?

A democracy cannot long subsist without patriotism. Patriotism, in its most comprehensive sense, is love for all the citizens of our country, past, present, and future. He is the true patriot, who, gazing upon so much of this aggregate as is susceptible of being influenced by his acts, strives to do whatever will augment its happiness, in contradistinction to whatever pertains to the enjoyment of the present or of a few. Utilitarianism, looking to the happiness of the whole race, comprehends nations as portions of one homogeneous entirety.

The peculiarities of individuals also indicate different criteria of morality. Warm affections seek a perfect object, and in communion and coincidence with it find their consolations. What can be offered to the pious man as a substitute for the all-absorbing love of God? High-toned character obeys its own dictates, and is true to itself. What did the necessities and spirit of his age, or even the apparent disfavor of Omnipotence itself, avail to bend the principles of Cato, or to deter him from launching, alone with his integrity, upon the unfathomable waves of eternity? A powerful and active intellect looks behind authority, and ever strives to escape from undemonstrable hypotheses. What probability is there that a mind like that of Bentham would submit to any bonds save those of logic?

By the above remarks, we have perhaps sufficiently indicated

the opinion that neither of the criteria above referred to is entitled to exclusive regard, but that each is a test of the moral quality of actions, to be used in combination with the others. This opinion seems to admit of valid defence by an inductive process of reasoning.

General experience shows that, with some apparent exceptions, we act rightly when we seek to promote the greatest amount of human happiness. The exceptions seem to be cases in which we may have mistaken the proper means of augmenting general happiness. It further shows that, with some apparent exceptions, we act rightly in obeying our consciences. The exceptions seem to be cases in which our consciences may have been influenced by mistaken opinions. It further shows that, with some apparent exceptions, we act rightly in obeying the will of God. The exceptions seem to be cases in which we may have mistaken its dictates. Hence we may, in the true inductive spirit, conclude that the will of the Deity, the dictates of an enlightened conscience, and the tendency of actions to produce the greatest amount of human happiness, coincide; and that the coincidence is a part of the unity of plan which characterizes the universe.

It is, therefore, unwise to say, that, inasmuch as we do not find the will of God clearly revealed upon some specific point, or distrust the genuineness of an alleged revelation, we will comply solely with the behests of conscience, or of utility; or that, inasmuch as men's moral sentiments vary, we must look solely to Divine revelation, or, on the other hand, to our practical experience of the tendencies of actions; or that, inasmuch as man's faculties are feeble and his reasonings on so complex a subject as human action often unreliable, our own conscience or the precepts of revelation are our only safe guide. As well might we, in view of the frequency of optical illusions, desist from the use of the eye; or, having often been deceived as to the origin and direction of sounds, reject the assistance of the ear. Experience shows that, although he who is deprived of the use of one of his senses, or even restricted to the use of one, may obtain tolerably accurate ideas of nature, the most precise knowledge is gained by the concurrence of all our means of observation. If we mistake not, those who apply all

the various tests of morality most distinctly perceive the moral qualities of actions.

We see, however, little reason to anticipate that philosophers will discontinue their disputes concerning the criterion of morality. Men's opinions will probably always be shaped by the truths which individual temperament and the circumstances of society most forcibly suggest. In society, as in the individual, there are periods during which particular qualities, and the opinions to which they give rise, tend to prevail. Where piety is the virtue most cultivated, the criterion which it suggests takes precedence of others. Where integrity (in its most comprehensive sense) is most honored, men will most frequently appeal to conscientious motives. Where philanthropy is chief among the virtues, utilitarianism dominates. To him who deems one state of society more excellent than others, the moral criterion adapted to that state will seem preferable. He who believes that the future of society will be characterized by the permanence of democracy and the triumphs of science, will consider utility the criterion to which truth awards the palm; while he who foresees in the future a repetition of the past, with its innumerable and ever-changing conditions of knowledge and government, will be enabled to appreciate the fulness and variety of the provisions made in the natural economy for the moral wants of man.

The different modes of inculcating morality illustrate the subject. In our endeavors to form the infant character, we, in the first instance, neither reason upon utility nor appeal to conscience, but present the duty of obedience to authority, — at first human, then divine. In teaching youth, we appeal to conscience.* In addressing adults, we discuss the tendencies of action.

The object of practical morality is the determination of the moral qualities of actions, by reference to all of the above criteria. The object of ethics is the study of the various theories of the criterion of morality, their relationship to each

* It is worthy of remark, that professors who have dwelt most upon the authority of conscience have been most successful in university instruction. The success of Dugald Stewart is commemorated by Mackintosh. Stewart, however, in a primary school, would have been as much out of place as Bentham in a college.

other, to the temperaments of theorists, and the conditions of society.

II. We now inquire concerning the state of mind with which we regard the moral qualities of actions. The problem pertains to the departments of metaphysics and physiology. The mere metaphysician will never arrive at the solution of this or of any other question relating to the human mind. The mere physiologist cannot deal with its subtler aspects. The intricacy of the subject demands a combination of the results of their labors.

The theories of metaphysicians concerning the moral sentiments are susceptible of a classification very similar to the foregoing. Some have considered the moral sentiment a divine impulse, implanted in the human heart, urging the performance of good actions and deterring from vice. This opinion combines itself, more or less, with most systems of theology, and is pushed to its greatest extent in those which regard human nature as totally depraved, and as supernaturally strengthened by the addition, in accordance with a previous plan of the Deity, of an effectual disposition to act aright. Thinkers who have imbibed most thoroughly the views of Augustine and of Calvin upon the nature of the human will, and of God's government, have been the most prominent defenders of this view.

Others hold that the moral sentiments consist of one or more specific and innate tendencies of our nature, whereby we select good and eschew evil.

Others view the moral sentiments as complex intellectual and emotional states, arising from the association of simpler mental and emotional conditions. Amid thinkers of this class, differences prevail as to the number and nature of the simple ingredients of these compound internal conditions. Mr. Bentham attempts to explain the manner in which self-regarding emotions lie at the root of all our actions, but are so often unrecognized as motives. Mr. Bain makes conscience an "ideal resemblance of public authority, growing up in the individual mind, and working to the same end." Sir James Mackintosh, who has so well appreciated the difficulties of the subject, and done so much towards its solution, considers the moral sentiments to be secondary desires or emotions, acquired after the

exercise of the primary emotions, and designed to regulate and harmonize them. These desires are conceived as originating from association of the perceived tendencies of voluntary action with the primitive emotions. The views of these thinkers concur in recognizing, to a greater or less extent, the emotional character of the moral sentiments, and in attempting to explain the mode in which these sentiments attain their specific character.

It is at once apparent that there is a close connection between these three classes of opinions concerning the moral sentiments, and the three kinds of criteria of moral actions.

He who considers the revealed will of God to be the standard of moral duty may readily believe that the Being who has shown such interest in man's salvation as to make a supernatural revelation will furnish our frail nature with other supports, in the shape of special supernatural incitements to well-doing.

He who recognizes in himself an unerring feeling, to which he can assign no definite origin, urging towards virtue and deterring from vice, may readily pronounce such a feeling to be a separate, independent, and primitive part of his nature.

He who takes utility for his standard observes that it is a tendency of actions discoverable by the intellect, and yet that conscience is strongly emotional in its character. He may, therefore, readily look for some connecting link between the intellectual process and the emotion, among the general principles which govern the association of thought and emotion.

Accordingly, as reference to writers already quoted abundantly shows, there has been a considerable degree of coincidence between the respective criteria and theories. The coincidence, however, is by no means necessary or invariable. A man may recognize the will of the Deity as the standard of morality, and yet consider that its dictates are to be ascertained by reference to an internal monitor, so contrived that its suggestions shall coincide with the Divine Will, or, on the other hand, maintain that the Divine Will is only discoverable by an intelligent appreciation of the mode in which it is revealed in nature. He who holds conscience to be supreme may regard it as divinely implanted, illumined, and inspired, or, on the other hand, derive its supremacy from its

concurrence with the highest happiness of man. He who is guided by deliberate examination of the tendencies of actions may regard their conclusions as suggested in doubtful cases from above,* or, on the other hand, maintain that the most profound view of utility justifies implicit obedience to the natural sense of right and wrong.

As our views of the standard of morality adapt themselves to our characters and general circumstances, so do the classes of opinions concerning the moral sentiments correspond to the different stages of scientific development, designated by Comte as the religious, the metaphysical, and the positive. The correspondence between theories of the moral sentiment and the condition of science is not, however, always observable. A philosopher may, as Comte has so frequently pointed out, be in one department of thought religious, in another metaphysical, in another positive, and science may in its departments present the same incongruity.

A review of these theories of the moral sentiments will show that each has certain prominent good and evil tendencies, and also certain salient features of truth and error.

The opinion that we are impelled to good and restrained from evil by divinely communicated principles of action, tends to promote a feeling of love and dependence towards the Supreme Being. The opinion that our nature is so defective as to stand in need of such an impulse, tends to create feelings of contempt for that nature, which find vent in asceticism. The truth embraced in this view is not merely the general truth, that all phenomena have as their cause the personal agency of the Supreme Being, but the special truth, that the higher the phenomenon in dignity and complexity, the higher the manifestation which it makes of the divine qualities. As in the stupendous sway of the law of gravitation we perceive the Divine Power, as in the manifold varieties and adaptations of inorganic and organic existence we may observe the Divine Wisdom, so in the workings of the moral nature of man we may trace the parental love and care of God. The error of this view lies in the assumption that man, without supernatural

* This was the condition of feeling of Socrates.

interference, is the mere sport of the lower propensities of his nature.

The opinion that an infallible natural monitor resides in the human breast tends to present to the mind the preponderant nature of moral considerations, but places other emotions at a distance below conscience not warranted by the facts of the case. The proper relationship of conscience to the benevolent sentiments is that of the superior to the inferior, and not that of the infallible to the fallible. The theorist of this school, unless corrected in his practice by strong benevolent sentiments, is apt to slight the gentle and kindly emotions of our nature, and invest duty with unnatural asperities. This opinion embraces the truth that conscience is a primitive emotion, and the error that it gives us intellectual guidance in distinguishing right from wrong.

The opinion that conscience is a compound faculty, deriving its origin from the association of ideas and sentiments, tends to promote watchfulness of the thoughts of ourselves and those intrusted to our care, for the purpose of laying the foundations of character in pure conceptions and correct reasonings. It, however, tends to make men consider conscience a mere matter of opinion and education, thereby relaxing, to some extent, the stringency of the moral code. It embraces the truth that other faculties combine to form the directing power whereby conscience is moved, and the error that these faculties are conscience itself.

We have indicated by the above remarks our view of the requisites of a correct theory of conscience. Such a theory must acknowledge that the higher phenomena of voluntary action manifest in a peculiar way and to a superior degree the personal agency of the Deity in the government of the universe, and must, at the same time, recognize natural virtuous tendencies. It must admit the primitive and original character of conscience, but deny that that faculty is originally a spur to specific acts of virtue. It must admit that our opinions concerning virtue and vice result from education, but deny that conscience is a combination of the primary emotions.

The outlines of such a theory may now be presented. We may begin by considering conscience as first developed in

animals and young children. Some thinkers, who have commenced at the same point, seem to us to have failed to observe the entire phenomena. Mr. Bain, in defending his view that conscience is an ideal representation of external government, remarks that "the child's susceptibility to pleasure and pain is made use of to bring about this obedience, and a mental association rapidly formed between disobedience and apprehended pain, more or less magnified by fear. The peculiarity attending the kind of evil inflicted as a deterring instrument is the indefinite continuance, or, it may be, increase of the infliction, until the end is secured. The knowledge of this leaves on the mind a certain dread and awful impression as connected with forbidden actions, which is the conscience in its earliest germ." * These remarks seem to us to express the truth imperfectly. When a child is deterred by the brandished rod from committing an act, the manifest restraining motive is the emotion of fear. That such an instance of discipline associates the idea of the action with that of the punishment, is true. That a number of acts of disobedience connected with a number of instances of punishment received or threatened, give rise to the abstract idea of disobedience as a quality of actions and punishment as one of their consequences, so that the idea of a certain action calls up the idea of punishment, which in its turn arouses the emotion of fear, is also true. Suppose, however, that, in the absence of the parent, an impulse arises towards a particular act, not in so many words prohibited, and the question of its punishability presents itself to the child's mind. An inductive process is resorted to in order to determine whether it belong to the class disobedient, followed by a deductive process whereby the quality of punishability is ascribed or withheld. If the result is that the quality of punishability is predicated of the action, there arises a deterring impulse of an emotional character. This tendency, resultant upon a mental process whereby a quality is predicated of an action, we maintain to be conscience in its germ, and to be of a specific character. The difference between our view of the process and that of philosophers of this school is, that

* *Emotions and Will*, p. 315. See also, in the same place, a quotation from Mr. James Mill to the same effect.

while they resolve the intellectual act which is admitted by all to form one of its original constituents into a mere association of ideas, we view the reasoning process as specifically distinct from, and superior to, mere ideation, and that, while they view the emotional part of the process as an emotion of the lowest grade, we consider it to be an emotion of as distinct a character as that of fear, but of a much higher grade. In like manner, where the hope of praise or reward has been the original motive applied, and association has formed the idea of praiseworthy as a quality of actions, a like reasoning process with regard to a contemplated action would, in our view, give rise to an impelling emotion of like specific character.

It is, however, maintained that the emotions thus originated are but the simple and familiar emotions of fear and hope, notwithstanding the universally admitted fact that the adult consciousness attests a broad and palpable distinction. The assertion seems to rest purely upon inference from two assumptions. The conduct resulting from the action of the rudimentary conscience is alleged to be the same as would be produced by fear, and the condition of the child's mind is declared to be the same. Identity of effect is, however, in this department of knowledge, very deceptive. If the hand be unwittingly placed against a heated substance, it is quickly withdrawn. The action of withdrawal is the same act which the fear of being burnt would occasion, had the danger been perceived. It is, however, a mere reflexo-motory act, resultant upon an impulse of a lower psychological rank than the emotion of fear, but somewhat analogous in character. If the eye is suddenly menaced by a foreign body, it is at once closed. This effect would be produced by the emotion of fear, were the danger perceived; but the act is merely senso-motory, resulting from an impulse lower than fear in the psychological scale, although higher than those which proceed from senses of a lower order than sight. The tendency of the childish conscience to induce abstinence from an act which the reasoning process has shown to be punishable may produce the same effect as fear, but be an emotion higher in psychological rank, although analogous in its conservative function.

The condition of the minds of children and animals labor-

ing under the rudimental conscience cannot be thoroughly explored, but seems distinguishable from fear by being less violent, and accompanied by a greater amount of intellectual effort. The countenance and gestures of a child or animal contemplating an act concerning the punishability of which a question is entertained, are generally characterized by painful dubiety rather than alarm. But, if it be contended that this distinction is not clearly observable, it still must be admitted that it is not absolutely disproved. To disprove it absolutely would rather devolve upon those who deny the conclusiveness of the adult consciousness upon this point.

According to this view, the moral sentiments are emotions preceded by intellectual processes whereby qualities are predicated of voluntary acts contemplated; in other words, by reasoning processes. Conscience is one of the emotional sides of reason, in the same manner as fear is one of the emotional sides of simple ideation, or as motion is the active side of sensation.

But as ideation is a vast and varied process, which has many emotional results, so reason is extensive and fruitful of resultant emotional conditions.

I may ascribe to an action the quality of promoting health. An impulse to perform the action follows the conviction, and is strong in proportion to the prevalence in my mind of sanitary considerations. I may conclude that another act would improve the acuteness of my senses. An impulse to perform it arises, powerful in proportion to the importance ascribed to taste or sight or hearing. I may infer that a certain position would enrich my mind with new and varied impressions. An impulse to assume it arises, powerful in proportion as extent of information and variety of mental impression are prized. I may decide that one course of mental discipline will strengthen the logical faculty, or that another will develop the benevolent emotions; and corresponding impulses arise, strong in proportion to my value of logical strength or emotional development. All of these impulses are emotional sides of reason, and as such present some similarity to conscience, but are clearly inferior in dignity to the fully developed conscience. The quality which the reasoning faculty ascribes to an action must, in order to awaken the specific impulse called con-

science, be conceived as promoting, not merely health or sense or ideation or emotion or intellect, but *the most comprehensive object of being which the mind has embraced*; some object in which all others are contained, or to which all others are subordinate.

The various standards which virtuous men have acknowledged coincide in constituting such objects. To comply with God's will, to obey conscience, to promote the greatest amount of happiness, are recognized respectively by the defenders of these criteria as constituting the highest objects of man's existence, whether that existence be considered as the preparation for a future state, or as terminating here, yet finding its highest happiness in harmonious development.

The kind of standard adopted depends to some extent, as has been shown, upon the laws of intellectual development. In many individuals the most comprehensive object of being which the intellect recognizes is so low and partial, that we may incur danger of concluding that the emotion which prompts to its attainment is selfish in character. We occasionally meet men who recognize no higher quality and object of being than pecuniary integrity, or patriotism, or fidelity to friends. In viewing that portion of their conduct of which they conscientiously approve, we observe an intellectual operation determining the conformity of an act to the standard adopted, followed by a specific impulse inciting or deterring. The intellectual process and the impulse are disinterested. It is true that the lower emotions may influence the intellect and corrupt its processes, so that the impulse which responds to these processes shall apparently coincide with the lower emotions. It does in such a case coincide with them in its tendencies to promote action; but the coincidence is that of two independent forces, and the observer who refers the conscience to the lower emotion commits an error similar to that of a moral agent who is apt to consider his lower emotions totally extinguished and merged in his conscience.

Conscience may, then, in our view, be defined as a specific influence urging us to perform such acts as the intellect considers conformable, and refrain from those which it considers not conformable, to the most comprehensive principles of con-

duct which the individual has adopted; or in other words, but with some sacrifice of clearness and with room for misapprehension, an original impulse to act upon general principles.

There are certain pleasures connected with the gratification of this impulse. An intellectual pleasure arises from contemplation of the conformity of actions with a moral standard, and resembles the pleasure which we derive from the contemplation of scientific truth. This pleasure has been blended with conscience itself, as was done by Malebranche when he defined virtue as consisting in love of the universal order as it exists in the Divine Reason, where every created reason contemplates it.

When an opinion is once formed as to the morality of a contemplated action, there follows a conscientious impulse, which is itself pleasurable, if allowed free action, but a source of uneasiness if baffled by the superior efficacy of some lower emotion. This is the genuine pleasure of well-doing, — a pleasure of mild and diffusive character, and of great permanence in its constitutional effects and intellectual persistency; while the misery of a baffled conscience is both acute and massive, although of less persistence. The proper gratification of this impulse consists in the performance of the various acts designated by the intellect as conformable to the acceptable standard.

As, however, the process of ideation implies sensations of which it is often considered an aggregation, as the reflective processes presuppose ideas of which they are often considered an association, so conscience implies original emotions of a lower order, to which it is so related as to be deemed by many to be composed of them as of simple ingredients. We recognize, however, the distinctness of an idea from an aggregate of sensations, of a reasoning process from a train of thought, and must, upon the same grounds, recognize the distinctness of conscience from the primitive emotions. This view, however, conducts us to a field of metaphysics much contested, and destined to be the theatre of future contests between those who would maintain the specific character of certain intellectual and emotional operations, and those who regard the mind as a unit.